G W 4 N 205

An Epistle of Consolation from the fresh Springs of Life, and flowings forth of the Fathers Love (through his Servant) as a tender Salutation extended to the whole Flock and Family of God; even to the lowest of his Babes and Servants, whose hearts are sincere and tender towards him: For their encouragement now in these Suffering and Trying times. By G. W.

O My dear and tenderly beloved Friends, Brethren, and Sisters, from the greatest to the least in my Fathers family, who are raised up by the power of an endless life, and begotten by the word of truth and life into a living faith and confidence in him who is our Rock and Refuge in all tryals, afflictions, and sufferings which we are exposed to, and undergo for the testimony of Righteousness and a good Conscience; unto you, even unto you who are partakers of this heavenly Calling, and whose hearts accordingly are set with a holy Resolution for the glory and honour of our God therein, is my heart filled with love unutterable, which ariseth from the fresh Springs of Life and Consolation made manifest from a living experience of the effectual power and work of God which hath given access into a heavenly habitation and Sanctuary wherein his presence is enjoyed, in which the fulness of Consolation and Joy resideth for the Righteous, and all such as wait upon the Lord our God in his own eternal spirit of life and holiness, whose delight is to dwell with him in his Mansion-house, which we have access into through the new and living way, which in the everlasting and unspeakable love of God in his own Son is now made manifest, and the many veils seen thorow, by which this way and habitation was hid from us, whilst our minds were alienated from the love and everlasting light of the Lord God and his Christ; but now therein is life and Salvation brought forth and come near to many, whose hearts are enclined towards him, and set to seek the fountain of life: And it is not the power of darkness, nor the enmity of the Serpent or old Dragon, nor the dark wrath of man that shall be able to hinder, obstruct, or frustrate the Lord God in his proceeding in this his great work of Righteousness, which by his mighty arm and power he will carry on and prosper, to the perfecting his own praise in his people, and as he hath glorified his everlasting name, and

Crowned his own ſeed with glory, victory, and tryumph thorow ſufferings and tribulations, (which glory and victory many in their own particulars are partakers of) ſo he will glorifie and renown his name and ſeed thorow thoſe tryals and ſufferings, which yet remain to be fulfilled amongſt his faithful witneſſes, ſervants, and people who are called, and choſen, and faithful, being endued with the ſpirit, nature, and properties of his Elect ſeed in which his ſoul delighteth, and with whom the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper, and which ſhall out live the enmity, and Reign over its Adverſaries and Oppreſſors, though they (for a time) be permitted to appear with a high hand, and the wicked ſo highly to lift their horns up againſt the ſeed of the Righteous; and to attempt the rooting out of the faithful from amongſt men; yet we have no cauſe (in any of theſe things) to diſtruſt the Lord, or to be weakened in our confidence which he hath raiſed up in us; for he is with us who is mighty to ſave, and his care, mercy, and tenderneſs is felt towards all that truly fear him, and obey his voice; and of this I am a living witneſs, who from time to time upon the weighty conſideration, and feeling of the goodneſs of our God, and largeneſs of his love to his people, have been and am filled with the ſenſe of his preſence and unſpeakable glory over all that which would oppreſs or hurt, which cannot enter into the holy Mountain, and in that glory and life received, is my heart and bowels of tender love enlarged towards all the upright in heart, who are come of a holy right ſeed, and ſprung forth from a noble Vine, and not only ſo, but in holy confidence, and ſtedfaſt Reſolution, are given up in the ſpirit of life, wiſdom, and power, and of the fear of the Lord, to follow him in the faith, patience, and ſuffering of his own faithful and Elect ſeed, which you that abide in, ſhall never degenerate from the nature and innocency thereof, but know your victory and dominion therein over death and hell, where the gates threeof ſhall never be ſuffered to prevail againſt you; for as in the faith and obedience you are given up in his will who hath called you, your habitation and ſecurity ſtands in his name and power, to which the Righteous flie and retire in all their troubles and tribulatio s, which though they be many, yet ſo many deliverances do they meet with all at his hand, who is our Rock and Refuge, whoſe Salvation becomes as Walls and Bulwarks for the faithful.

Oh

BRITISH MUSEUM

Oh my dear Friends both in the City of *London*, *Briſtol*, *Hartford*, *Reading*, *Colcheſter*, and elſewhere in this Nation of *England*, who for the tryal and exerciſe of your faith and patience thorow many tribulations and ſufferings, and who more particularly at this day and time are under a deep tryal and exerciſe, [the power of darkneſs and its Inſtruments being permitted to afflict you, and to break your harmleſs and innocent Meetings, and to hurry many of you into holes and priſons,] and yet you retain ſo much tenderneſs in your ſpirits towards God and reſpect to his teſtimony and cauſe, that you dare not deny him, but muſt confeſs him and his truth and righteous teſtimony and worſhip before men, and for that cauſe have given your backs to the ſmiters, and expoſed your ſelves to undergo the deep ſufferings or penalties, that men may be permitted to inflict upon you; and even to give up your lives for a prey, rather then the name of the Lord ſhould be diſhonoured by you; Oh dear hearts hold faſt your confidence and reſolution in the name and power of the everlaſting Jehovah, in whom is your ſtrength and ſafety, and keep within, and be retired in your minds when temptations or any diſcouragements would enter you to weaken any of your faith, for in the light and power of the God of *Jacob*, a ſafe habitation is known, out of, and above all the troubles of the world, and the perſecutions that we meet with in it, and in the ſecret pavilion of the Almighty, and hiding places of the Lord, the oppreſſed that wait upon him find a Refuge in the time of trouble, and therein do ſee over all the blackneſs and darkneſs which hath covered the Earth, in which the enmity worketh againſt the righteous ſeed, and do know a ſweet repoſe in their deepeſt ſufferings and tryals, and that Well-Spring of life is ſet open in them which makes all eaſie to them, and ſanctifies every ſtate and condition of what tryal or exerciſe ſoever they meet with for the name of God or his teſtimony; and herein joy, and peace, and everlaſting glory and triumph is ſeen and felt by all the faithful and ſincere in heart over all their oppreſſors.

And that all you ſincere hearted and tender Friends, whoſe eyes are turned towards your maker, and whoſe faces are ſet Sion-ward may be ſo retire in your minds to the principle of truth, and ſo watchful in the light of the Lord, and to enjoy a peaceable habitation and ſanctuary in him in all your ſufferings, for this hath my

ſoul travelled, waited, and breathed unto the God of my life and Salvation, and that you all may feel your eſtabliſhment and ſecurity in the life and Covenant of the everlaſting God, and in the enjoyment of the true Communion and fellowſhip of the everlaſting Goſpel, wherein every member of the body in that Communion doth partake of the living bread in the Fathers Manſion-houſe, and therein become one bread to the ſtrengthning, refreſhing, conſolating, and building up of one another in the moſt holy faith, which worketh by love, and which edifies the whole body throughout, which all that come truly to partake of and enjoy, 'tis neither perſecutions, nor tribulations, nor principalities, nor powers, nor thrones, nor dominions, that ſhall be able to ſeparate them from the love of God in Chriſt; neither ſhall any Rent or Schiſm come within that bond of love or bundle of life, wherewith ſuch are bound up together; for they are ſuch as have overcome by faith and patience, and have offered up all to the will of him that hath called them, and their name ſhall not be blotted out of the Book of Life, but be confeſſed before the heavenly father and his Angels, in as much as they have confeſſed him and his Son, and held forth his teſtimony, and not been aſhamed thereof before men: And theſe are they that are ſo nearly related unto God in his own likeneſs and heavenly Image, that they are his choſen, refined, and precious Jewels, never to be forgotten by him, nor ſeparate from him, for they are as the Apple of his eye, and engraven in the Palms of his hands; and ſuch a Remnant our God certainly hath in this Nation, in whom I have ſeen that which my ſoul hath travelled for, and which hath been to my ſouls ſatisfaction, and as one having largely felt the Lords preſence, and ſtill feeling the enjoyment of the ſame, and his glory to be the Reward, as it is to thoſe that miniſter relief to the oppreſſed, and bread to the hungry, for which many can bleſs the Lord on our behalf I find the ſame living faith and confidence remaining in me, in behalf of the work of the Lord, and the proſperity thereof as ever; and this is the work that he hath made me and others of his faithful ſervants inſtruments in, which is ſo far brought to paſs and effected by his mighty power, as all the powers of darkneſs hell, and death, ſhall never be able to undoe it, nor all the ſtorms, tryals, or oppoſitions that ever we meet withall ſhall ever be able to diſanull it, or put a ſtop to it; for it ſhall proſper

over

over the heads of all the adversaries and oppressers of the righteous seed; and that testimony which we have stood up for in this Nation shall never be extinguished, but be had in everlasting remembrance; and this hath the Lord sealed and confirmed unto my soul, so as its neither imprisonment, nor exilement, nor death it self that I look out at; but as to what the Lord may suffer in these things I commit to him, as knowing a life in that faith that sees to the end of these things, and beyond the wrath of man and enmity of the wicked, which so highly is at work in our dayes, as had not the Lord in a great measure put a limit and restraint thereto it would have extended to the taking away many of our lives, not onely by that covertly way of hard imprisonment, and lingering martyrdome therein, but also by speedy execution under pretence and colour of legal proceeding or justice (so called) on the persecutors parts; and how far yet the Lord may suffer the enmity to proceed in that case against any of us, his will be done; and that I commit unto him who is the wise God as not being careful in it: but thus far I can say, That we must be willing to offer up our selves unto the deepest and utmost tryals, as required therein, to hold forth our testimony for our further manifestation, and both the righteous and the wicked shall be tryed in their way, and our God hath raised up a remnant whom he hath prepared and fitted to try those weapons and unrighteous decrees that are formed against the righteous seed, and they shall be tryed to the utmost, and broken thorow; for no weapon formed against *Zion* shall prosper, because the righteousnes of her children is of the Lord, who must have the glory in the deliverance of his own seed, and in the removing the rod of the oppressor, and breaking asunder the bands and cords of the wicked, who have taken counsel together against him and his anointed, whom he that sitteth in the heavens hath in derision in all their high and proud attempts against him and his seed, and their unrighteous designs and consultations, which would debar his anointed of his liberty in his people and followers; but the King of *Zion* is set upon his holy hill, who shall rule nations with a rod of iron, and break them as the vessels of a potter; for power shall be given him over the Nations, and he shall lay *Babylon* utterly waste, and her noise, musick, pomp, and vain glory shall cease, in which she hath rejoyced over the Saints and true witnesses, and followers

of

of the Lamb, and the slain in her the earth shall not cover, but discloſe her blood, when the indignation of the Lord breaks forth, and his vials of wrath comes to be emptied by his Angels, and executioners of juſtice upon the ſeat of the Beaſt (that hath upheld *Babylon* in her abominations, and them that have taken part with, and followed the Beaſt) and perſecuting ſpirit.

And our God is the ſame that ever he was to his own, and his promiſes fail not, but are now a fulfilling: And therefore O thou ſeed of *Jacob*, and off-ſpring of *Iſrael*, whom God hath choſen, fear thou not, nor be diſmaid, for I am with thee, ſaith the Lord; I will ſtrengthen thee, and help, and uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs, and all they that are inſenced againſt thee, and they that ſtrive with thee ſhall be aſhamed and confounded, and ſhall be as nothing: yea, they ſhall periſh that war againſt thee: fear not thou worm *Jacob*; but ariſe in the power of the holy one; for to thee it is given to threſh the mountains, with thy ſharp threſhing inſtrument, and to beat them ſmall, and to make the hills as chaff, and thou ſhalt rejoyce in the Lord; and thoſe that come of thee ſhall take root, and *Iſrael* which prevaileth with God ſhall bloſſom, and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit, and I will be as the dew unto him; he ſhall grow as the Lilly, and caſt forth his roots as *Lebanon*, ſaith the Lord: What though if men be ſuffered to perſecute, hurry about, exile, tranſport or tranſplant any of us who are of this ſeed; yet they cannot hinder this from growing, nor the branches thereof from ſpreading over Nations and Kingdoms, becauſe our God hath cauſed, and will yet cauſe his own ſeed to take deep root among nations and people, and will root out the uncircumciſed before his plant.

And thou, O *Zion*, and Church of the living God and ſuffering ſeed, who haſt laid thy body as the ground, and as the ſtreet to them that went over, that thou mighteſt keep thy conſcience clear, and not bow down thy ſoul for thy enemies to go over it; the Lord thy God that pleadeth the cauſe of his people, will give the cup of trembling and fury which thou haſt drunk of into the hand of them that afflict thee; therefore put on ſtrength and courage in the Lord thy God, and ſhine forth in thy brightneſs and beauty; for he is with thee, who hath laid thy foundations with Saphires, and thy ſtones with fair colours, and he will adorne thy dwelling, and beautifie thy

ſci-

ſcituation, as with the moſt precious and pleaſant ſtones, though thou haſt been as one afflicted and toſſed with tempeſts and troubles within and without, and whoſoever ſhall gather together againſt thee ſhall fall for thy ſake, and the gathering of the people, and the fulneſs of the Gentiles ſhall be unto thee, and the ſons of them that afflicted thee, and all them that have deſpiſed thee ſhall bow and bend before thee.

O my dear friends who are come to a living faith concerning theſe things, and to know that ſeed, in which all the promiſes of God are, yea, and Amen, dwell and abide therein; and as you are called to bear a publick teſtimony for God, in order to the gathering of many unto the covenant of promiſe; ſo be faithful in holding forth that teſtimony, though for it many be called to ſuffer in this day of tryal, and to offer up all for the ſake thereof; yet the Lord being with us let us go on in his name, and by him make mention thereof, and vindicate his worſhip in ſpirit and truth, which we ſuffer for, and in the power, authority, and counſel of God ſtand up for our juſt liberty therein before our perſecutors, and Judges, when we are called before them, and in the weighty and feeling ſpirit of life, Friends to endeavour (when called before their oppreſſors) to faſten ſomething upon their conſciences, for the innocency of our Cauſe, and when any of them are tryed in order to baniſhment, (or the like) that they may be ſo kept in the fear and counſel of God, having their ſpirits ſeaſoned with his life, as they may be manifeſt in the conſciences of both their perſecutors and ſpectators; and that it may be apparent that friends are in the name of the Lord, which is above every earthly name (how great ſoever) and that in this name of our God we walk and ſuffer for obeying him, and aſſembling together ſingly and innocently in his way and worſhip, and ſuffer upon an innocent and conſcientious account whatever otherwiſe men unrighteouſly pretend againſt us; and this our ſuffering ſhall preach, and the Goſpel of the Kingdom ſhall there thorow be witneſſed and founded forth to the gathering in of many into the love of that truth which we have received, though ſome that are unfaithful, and ſuch as back-ſlide in heart ſhall be ſcattered and blown away with the ſtorm; but the faithful and upright, whoſe hearts are perfect towards God, he will ſhew himſelf ſtrong on their behalf, and they that follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goes, who through great

great tribulation have their garments washed in his Blood, and who abide in the Temple and habitation of the living God, serving him continually therein, the storm shall not be suffered to remove them, nor the heat to scorch them, but under the shadow of their souls beloved they shall sit down in peace, and the Lamb shall feed them, and lead them unto the fountains of waters; even so the Lord God encompass all you his dear babes and spiritual off-spr ng with the arme of power, and make you as a wa cred Garden, and surround you within the bounds of his salvation, and confound your enemies, and make their evil designs and intentions void and frustrate, that he alone may have the glory and preheminence amongst his people in this his day.

From your dear brother and fellow sufferer who travels in spirit and waits in patience with the suffering seed for Sions *deliverance out of all her troubles, and victory over all her enemies.*

Written in the White Lion Prison, *London*, the 23d. of the 7th. Moneth, 1664. *G. W.*

W. M.

The End.